REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is requested. Claims 15-25 are in the case.

I. ELECTION/RESTRICTION

The election of Group I is hereby affirmed. Claims canceled from the application have been deleted without prejudice to pursuing that subject matter in a separate continuing application.

II. DECLARATION

A substituted executed declaration is attached to the present response. Entry of the attached declaration is respectfully requested.

III. SEQUENCE IDENTIFIERS

The specification has been objected to as not containing identifiers of the sequences presented in Sequence Listing materials. In response, the brief description of Figures 2a and 2b and of Figure 4 have been amended to include reference to the SEQ ID NOS. Withdrawal of this objection is now respectfully requested.

IV. THE SPECIFICATION

A new Abstract is presented based on that appearing on the front face of the underlying PCT International Application. No new matter is entered.

A new title is presented based on that suggested by the Examiner. The Examiner's assistance in this regard is appreciated.

The specification has been amended at page 11 to capitalize "LYMPHOPREP" and to indicate it as a trademark. Entry of this amendment is respectfully requested.

V. THE 35 U.S.C. § 112, FIRST PARAGRAPH, REJECTION

Claims 1-8 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, on alleged lack of enablement grounds. In response, and without conceding to the merit of this rejection, all claims in this application have been canceled without prejudice, and replaced by new claims 15-25. The method as now claimed is directed to testing to detect whether a human female subject is predisposed to POF by analyzing the nucleotide present at position 769 of the gene encoding inhibin. The claims presented herewith are clearly enabled by the present specification, and withdrawal of the outstanding lack of enablement rejection is in order. Such action is respectfully requested.

VI. THE 35 U.S.C. § 112, SECOND PARAGRAPH, REJECTION

Claims 1-8 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly indefinite for the reasons stated on pages 10-12 of the Action. In response, and without conceding to the merit of that rejection, claims 1-8 and 10 have been canceled without prejudice, and replaced by new claims 15-25. The language "detecting the presence or absence of an alteration in the gene encoding inhibin" does not appear in new claim 15. It is believed that new claims 15-25 are in full compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Withdrawal of the outstanding 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, rejection is accordingly respectfully requested.

Allowance of the application is awaited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Executed Substitute Declaration

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 19, as follows:

Figure 2*a* is an Electropherogram displaying the sequence of the *INH βA*1 variant (SEQ ID NO:33) (patient 8) compared to the wild-type (WT) sequence (SEQ ID NO:32). Arrows indicates C to T sequence change in the variant, and the corresponding nucleotide in the wild-type sequence.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 24, as follows:

Figure 2*b* is an Electropherogram displaying the sequence of the *INH α*1 variant (SEQ ID NO:35) (patient 1) compared to the wild-type (WT) sequence (SEQ ID NO:34). Arrows indicates G to A sequence change in the variant, and the corresponding nucleotide in wild-type sequence.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 4, as follows:

Figure 4 shows the alignment of the *INHα* gene subunit amino acid sequences from the human (SEQ ID NO:1), horse (SEQ ID NO:2), porcine (SEQ ID NO:3), ovine (SEQ ID NO:4), mouse (SEQ ID NO:5), bovine (SEQ ID NO:6), possum (SEQ ID NO:7), chicken (SEQ ID NO:8) and rat (SEQ ID NO:9). DNA sequences were obtained from Genbank. The arrow indicates the amino acid altered by the G>A mutation.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 33, as follows:

Genomic DNA was extracted from 10 ml samples of blood. Lymphocytes were isolated from blood samples using the ~~NYCOMED LymphoprepTM Kit~~LYMPHOPREP™

Kit (Nycomed, Norway). Cells were incubated at 65°C for 1 hour with 3.5 ml 6 M GuHC12, 250 µl 7.5 M NH4Ac, 50 µl mgml-1 Proteinase K and 250 µl 20% Na Sarcosyl. Cells were added to 2 ml of cold CHCL3 and then spun at 2000 rpm for 3 minutes. The top layer was collected and added to